

**Method and Apparatus for  
Secondary Use of Devices With Encryption**

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**ABSTRACT**

The invention provides for utilizing abilities of network interfaces, such as  
10 embedded encryption support, or access to such encryption support, so as to extend  
support for such abilities to network interfaces or other devices lacking such ability. In  
one configuration, a non-homogeneous team of network interfaces is presented to a  
protocol stack as being a homogeneous team, by having network interfaces lacking a  
particular ability be backed up by team member supporting the ability. Various methods  
15 may be applied to distribute the work load of backing up network interface according to  
an operation mode of the team. For example, when operating in load balancing mode,  
performing backup services is balanced across the team, whereas in a fault tolerant  
mode, processing may be first given to non-primary network interfaces.